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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

683.87/6-1652  
XR 683.8732

FROM AMEMBASSY, BAGHDAD

1261  
DESP. NO.

TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

June 16, 1952  
DATE

REF Beirut Telegram 1396 of June 12 (Locke 15); Embassy despatches Nos. 1235 of June 10, 1208 of June 4, 814 of March 4, 1952.

2 For Dept. Use Only ne	ACTION TCA	DEPT. I N F O	REP DCR NEA OLI
	REC'D JUNE 25	OTHER	COMM MSA IN JIDDA LONDON PARIS ANKARA XMB AMMAN BEIRUT BENGHAZI CAIRO DAMASCUS

SUBJECT: DIVISION OF EUPHRATES WATERS

*OLIM*

Prime Minister Selo's reaction to Prime Minister Nuri's suggestion regarding a tripartite Syro-Turk-Iraqi board to study riparian interests in Euphrates waters, namely that he preferred an ad hoc Syro-Iraqi agreement to permit work to go forward on the Yusif Pasha project (Beirut Reftel), was discussed with Mr. Wesley R. Nelson, American member of the Central Development Board.

Mr. Nelson expressed some opposition to Colonel Selo's reasoning. His off-hand opinion was that not only political expediency but also the engineering problems involved would seem to make it logical that Turkey participate in any discussion of dam projects on the Euphrates. He noted that the Yusif Pasha dam would probably back water up in Turkish territory. Moreover, he expressed the opinion that from an engineering standpoint best use of Euphrates water might indicate that the major dam should be constructed not in Syria, not in Iraq, but rather in Turkey.

A suitable dam located near the origins of the Euphrates in Turkey would permit the development of hydro-electric power (for Turkish and possibly Syrian markets) and at the same time furnish the regulatory apparatus for control and irrigation on the lower reaches of the river in Syria and Iraq.

Mr. Nelson was under no illusions about the political difficulties involved in devising such schemes, but he did believe that a tripartite study by competent experts would put the whole problem in clearer perspective.

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